

# **Needles - Reddie**

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## Needles - Reddie by GalacticJackk

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**Summary:**

Modern Day. At 16, Richie finally gets his testosterone prescription and is so excited to become the man that he has always wanted to be. There's one problem though: he is deathly afraid of needles. Thankfully, he has a best friend that is happy to help.

Warnings: None.

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*Shots. Why did it have to be shots?* Richie's shaky hands held onto a fresh syringe so tightly that his knuckles turned white. He felt his palms begin to sweat and his face flush, a feeling that brought back memories from various shots he had to get throughout his life; and such occasions were never a pleasant experience. Often he would be gripping onto his mother's hand with bone-breaking force and closing his eyes so tightly that his head began to hurt. The nurses always looked at him and rolled their eyes. How could a sixteen year old still be afraid of shots? He tried so hard not to be afraid but sure enough, every time he had to get the dreaded shoulder prick of a flu shot he would breathe so hard that it almost made him pass out (and on a few occasions, he did.)

Previously though, he tried to worm his way out of having to get them ("I don't really need a flu shot! I never get sick!" or "I'm not going to get mumps, that shit died like 100 years ago.") but this time was different because he really *really* wanted the shot. He had waited four years to start testosterone (the wait at the insistence of his mother) and he would not back down. Usually his dysphoria didn't get to him, but since he started high school it was becoming really hard to pretend he was like the rest of the boys. He didn't have the deep voice, hairy legs, or adams apple that all teenage boys seemed to develop through puberty and he was desperately craving them. It was stupid, really, and he knew that. Being practically hairless and having a soft voice didn't make him any less of a man but he was tired of all of the weird looks that people gave him when he would correct misgendering or insist "Yes my name is really Richie and no it is not a girl's name, thank you very much!" So today was the day that he had to conquer one of his biggest fears so that he could look and feel the way he had wanted to his entire life.

"Come on Tozier, don't be a pussy..." He whispered to himself as he inched the needle closer to his flesh. His heart pounded audibly in his ears and he felt like he was seeing double. His hand shook violently as he got closer and closer, beads of sweat forming on his brow. He touched the needle to his skin and then yelped, pulling his arm away quickly and trying to catch his breath.

“Okay, maybe some music would help!” Richie said aloud, and grabbed his phone from his bed. He put his music library on shuffle and *Feel it Still* by Portugal. The Man played over his speakers. The song was turned almost all the way up, making him feel like he could take on the world. He could do anything, except for give himself a shot. This time he took a big deep breath, pulling air all the way through his lungs and then exhaling loudly, moving the needle towards his leg in time with his breath. *So close...almost there!* He closed his eyes and felt nothing, he took another breath through the pain and felt delighted as he successfully completed his first T shot. He opened his eyes, expecting to see blood coming from the small prick in his leg but instead saw the needle sitting just above the skin, still full of the coveted liquid. “Dammit, Tozier!” He exclaimed, and threw the syringe onto his pillow and flopped backwards onto his bed. He was profoundly disappointed in himself, and he knew that he was being a big baby but he couldn’t stop himself. He sighed, and paused the music on his phone. It was time to call for backup.

“What is it, Richie?” Eddie answered the phone with his regular suspicious voice whenever Richie called. He knew that Richie didn’t call anyone unless he needed something, and usually it was something ridiculous that would get Eddie into trouble with his mother or the police or both.

“Hey Eeeeeeeeds, are you buuuuuuuuusy?” Richie asked with a sickeningly sweet voice, knowing this would set off Eddie’s suspicions even more. He wouldn’t admit it to anyone, but he loved making Eddie feel on edge because every time he did he made the cutest face that made Richie’s heart soar.

Eddie sighed loudly into the phone, “Richie, two things. First, you know I hate it when you call me that. And second, if whatever you want is going to get me arrested, then forget it.” Richie could hear Eddie rolling his eyes over the phone and imagined him with the adorable angry face that he loved so much.

“I promised you no more run-ins with the law, remember?” Richie replied with a smile on his face and he could tell that Eddie was shaking his head in annoyance. “Besides, there’s no police involved today, that’s for tonight.”

“Tonight? What do you—”

“Listen,” Richie cut him off and sat up in his bed, “I need you to help me with something...medical.”

Eddie raised an eyebrow and tilted his head curiously. “Medical, how so?”

Richie inhaled and exhaled, his heart beginning to thump as he thought about the shiny silver needle piercing his skin. “So I got my testosterone prescription and—”

“Oh right! But you’re afraid of needles...do you want me to come help you?” Much to Richie’s surprise, Eddie has guessed exactly what Richie was thinking. As far as he could remember, he never told anyone about his fear of needles because he thought that people would make fun of him for it. At some point it must have slipped out to Eddie, and Richie was beyond flattered that he remembered. He could always count on Eddie to remember the little things, for better or worse.

“Yes please!” Richie agreed, a huge smile stretching across his face. Butterflies began to form in his stomach when he thought about the other boy smiling as widely as he was. In Richie’s opinion, Eddie had the cutest smile he had ever seen.

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“Richie!” Eddie exclaimed and wiped the sweat from his brow. “You have to sit still.” He insisted as Richie squirmed underneath his grasp. He was sitting on his bed with his legs on the floor and Eddie kneeling in front of him, trying desperately to push the needle into his skin and ultimately failing every time he got close. They had been at it for 20 minutes, Richie spent the first 10 shamelessly flirting with Eddie and putting the shot off for as long as he could, Eddie looking at him disapprovingly and rejecting all of his advances. This was a game that they played: Richie would “fake” flirt with Eddie just like he did with everyone else, and Eddie would brush it off and pretend that he hated it but truly, he lived for it. Eddie’s heart skipped a beat every time that Richie winked in his direction, even if outwardly he looked displeased.

"I know it doesn't seem like it, but I really am trying to sit still." Richie groaned and put his hands over his eyes. He let out a loud sound and slid the palms of his hands down his face, stretching his skin and rolling his eyes. He shook his head, took a deep breath and then laughed to himself. "It's just hard to sit still when you're on—"

"If you say something about me being on my knees, i'll stick you right now." Eddie interjected and held the needle close to the skin of Richie's thighs menacingly. He yelped, and apologized for his crude joke even though Eddie wasn't really that upset. "Just, put on some music or something." He suggested, taking out another cotton pad and soaking it in rubbing alcohol so that he could clean the germs off of Richie's leg for the upteenth time (after every almost-shot, Richie would fervently rub his leg in the spot where the needle would have gone)

Richie sighed heavily and reached for his phone once again. He shuffled his library, and heard the familiar sound of The 1975's song *fallingforyou* playing melodically out of his phone. He had spent more nights than he cared to admit staying up and listening to this song, thinking of his best friend. Eddie was most of what Richie thought about these days, and it confused him greatly. They had known each other since they were children, but lately the friendly feelings that Richie had for him started to become...something different. Of course he loved Mike, Ben, Bill, Stan, and Bev but his love for Eddie wasn't quite the same. He found himself imagining them sitting together with their hands clasped, joking back and forth and laughing together. He noticed recently that Eddie's lips always looked incredibly soft, and whenever Eddie talked Richie would lean forward ever so slightly, trying to look closer at his petal soft mouth. As he thought about what it would be like to feel Eddie's lips, his heart began to hammer in his chest.

As Eddie wiped down Richie's leg, he listened intently to the song that was playing. For some reason, the lyrics seemed to strike him deeply as he tenderly touched his best friend's leg. Richie seemed to grab his attention more and more as the days went by and he couldn't help but notice how much closer the two had been recently, and it made him feel something that he had never felt before. Being an introvert, Eddie often got drained by hanging out with people for

too long but it was never the case with Richie. He always wanted to be by his side, even if they were doing nothing together he always enjoyed himself. The song made him feel woozy as butterflies rose in his stomach and gave him tingles over his entire body. He shook his head, and stopped wiping down Richie's leg. Then, he looked up.

The two locked eyes, Eddie looking up at Richie and Richie looking down at him. There was a fondness to both of their gazes, and an intensity that couldn't be disguised. For moments they just sat there, unmoving, looking into each other's eyes. The song faded out of their ears and they just heard silence and the beat of their hearts. Eddie sat up very slowly on his knees and Richie leaned back, looking at the other boy with such admiration that you could feel it in the air. They seen each other's eyes before of course, but now it was different. It was like they had never seen one another before and they were now just meeting, two strangers in love. Richie glanced down to Eddie's lips and leaned forward, inching closer to the other boy impossibly slowly. He blinked, and when he did, he felt a sharp prick in his thigh.

He squeaked and threw his hands over his eyes, waiting for the pain to be over. "Okay Richie, all done." Eddie muttered and took a deep breath as he pulled the last of the needle out of the other boys skin.

Richie pulled his hands off of his eyes and blinked hard, watching Eddie clean up all of the supplies. "Is it really over?"

Eddie smiled to himself and nodded, "Yes it's over." He was acting calm, but his pulse was still racing from the moment they had just shared.

"Are you sure, that was really fast!"

"Yes, i'm sure."

"I did it Eds!"

"Richie don't call me Eds-"

"It wasn't even that bad! it was just a little pinch and then over!"

"I know! i was trying to tell you-"

“Now i’m gonna grow a beard and a mustache and get a really deep voice and i’m going to be so hot!” Richie let out a noise of excitement and fell backwards in his bed, his heart full of happiness and pure joy. He had waited for this moment for years and he was able to share it with his favorite person in the entire world. Eddie always kept him calm, through thick and thin he was always there to be Richie’s anchor—shitty jokes included. He felt like the today was the first day of the rest of his life, and he didn’t know what was going to happen down the line but he knew that he wanted Eddie by his side, always.